



Campus Journalism Training, Students' Writing Skills and the Status of the Official Student Publication in English

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Abstract— The study aimed to determine the effect of a Five-Day Intensive Training on Campus Journalism on the staffers' journalistic writing skills and status of the student publication of Subic National High School for the current year, the School Year 2019-2020. There were fifteen (15) student-journalists who undergo the five-day intensive training and three hundred ninety-four (394) selected stakeholders of the school who evaluated the status of the student publication. The student-journalists perceived that the result of the intensive training significantly improved their journalistic writing skills. The study proved that the level of journalistic writing skills of the staffers was improved from the pre to post-evaluations that attained an advanced proficiency level in terms of headline writing and copy reading, news writing, feature writing, sports writing, photojournalism, and editorial writing. Findings revealed that there was a significant change in the status of The Reporter after the five-day intensive training which proved that the staffers acquire necessary skill and improved their journalistic writing skills. Based on the results gained, the researcher concluded that the conduct of the intensive training on campus journalism has a positive effect on the journalistic writing skills of the staffers that will consequently result in an improved school paper.

Keywords— Campus Journalism, School Paper, Training, Writing Skills

I. INTRODUCTION

It has been said that journalism provides the first rough draft of history. That is why student publication has been a part of the educational system. Republic Act No. 7079, which is known as the Campus Journalism Act of 1992 declares the policy of the state to uphold and protect the freedom of the press even at the campus level and to promote the development and growth of campus journalism as a means of strengthening ethical values, encouraging critical and creative thinking, and developing moral character and personal discipline of the Filipino youth.

One way to promote the development and growth of campus journalism is through rigid training where skills in journalistic writing will be honed. This will be done by the initiative of the publication adviser together with the coaches in different categories. Student-Journalist as the main contributor to the success of every school paper must be equipped with knowledge and skills including attitudes towards effective journalism. Seminar-workshop will serve as an additional strategy in teaching campus journalism to the students to acquire needed information and first-hand experiences with the journalists [1]. On the other hand, coaches must also be trained in the field of campus journalism [2].

At present, print media have been regarded as the oldest mass communication in the Philippines, in Asia and in the world. In this manner, many readers opt not to read printed newspapers, instead, they subscribed to only publications and news websites. This has been mentioned by [3] in their book entitled Philippine Communication: An Introduction. Furthermore, [4] in their research journal article entitled Status of Student Publications of State University in Region III stated that although print media are the oldest, they are still regarded as very effective in delivering new information to the populace.

This study attempted to determine the effect of a Five-Day Intensive Training on Campus Journalism on the staffers' journalistic writing skills and the status of the student publication of Subic National High School for the current year, the School Year 2019-2020. Specifically, the researcher aimed to determine the level of journalistic writing skills of the staffers before and after the training; to determine the status of student publication before and after the conduct of the training; to determine the effect of the five-day intensive training on the status of the student publication and journalists' writing skills, and to identify the significant change in the status of the student publication after the training.

II. RELATED WORK

Journalism

Journalism refers to the activity of gathering and presenting news for public dissemination. It has played a central role in modern society as a political institution, a business [5], and a form of popular culture [6]. According to [7], true journalism is the patroness of all humanitarian and technical disciplines which should build and live in any social environment, and in good and bad times together.

The contribution made by the school publications to the educational advancement of the individual is also significant. It would be impossible for a student publication to enhance the total program very much without making a substantial contribution to the individual student's development. Implementing these principles of good editing requires skilled staff, an attractive format, adequate space for news and comments, and a sound business foundation.

Campus Journalism

Campus Journalism serves as a training ground in the organization, in interviewing speech art, and in broadcasting understanding and appreciation of people and situations. It is also a prevalent co-curricular activity among the student population. [8] defines campus journalism as an important learning aspect that teaches students to express themselves through writing, and informs school and community about school affairs.

In schools, campus journalism is now part of the co-curricular activities that enable students to compete in different contests. Furthermore, school publications meet the requirements of students by providing an outlet for their ideas, allowing them to practice creativity, and allowing them to build critical and thinking abilities. It is also a formal manner for them to express themselves appropriately, and it has the potential to affect the students' as well as their readers' perceptions [9].

However, upholding these commitments is a significant problem for campus media. They have a lot riding on them. RA 7079 gives campus journalists the ability to develop themselves, their ethical principles, critical thinking, moral development, and personal discipline, in addition to upholding press freedom on a school level [10]. As a result, students must broaden their knowledge of the underlying principles of the law [11].

On the other hand, local journalism can be a good source of information that readers may acquire even in online media [12]. Generally, there are four functions of journalism: to inform the public through the news coverage; to influence and mold public opinion; to amuse or entertain the public and to serve and promote community welfare as a whole [13]. In some cases, journalism promotes training and education on global health reporting through global health journalism [14].

Campus Journalism Training

Training and seminar are part of the school system. Aiming for better performance is best achieved through proper training. It has been said that training is a process that can effectively enhance individual abilities [15]. According to R.A. 7079 conduct of seminars shall be held at institutional, divisional, and regional levels. Also, it was stated in Section 2 that the state should undertake various programs and projects aimed at improving the journalistic skills of students concerned and promoting responsible and free journalism. Various programs and projects include training which will be conducted by either the student publication adviser or anyone in the same field.

Similarly, a good school paper has intelligent and diligent staffers, pleasing format-be it tabloid or newsletter type, adequate space for the school, community, DepEd, and government-oriented news and comment, and a sound journalistic foundation. [16] in their book entitled Principles of Campus Journalism, the success of the campus newspaper depends to a large extent on the adviser or moderator. Training the student staff members well and directing their work properly requires expertise on the job, including research work, which must be introduced [17].

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design enabled to determine the effect of the intervention by assessing the change in the student-journalists writing skills and the status of the student publication after the conduct of the intensive training.

The researcher utilized the pretest and posttest research design to determine the effect of the five-day intensive training on campus journalism in student-journalist writing skills. It was also used to determine the status of The Reporter, the student publication of Subic National High School for the School Year 2019-2020.

Since the training was conducted on the student-journalists, a quasi-experimental method was used. Before the training, the researcher evaluated the June to December 2018 student publication, required student-journalists to submit written articles for the assessment of their writing skills, then conducted a five-day intensive training on campus journalism. Another evaluation was made after the training for June to December 2019 student publications and the writing skills of the student journalists.

Respondents

Participants of this research were the selected stakeholders of the school and the student journalist of the school. Stratified Random sampling using Slovin's Formula was used to identify respondents of the study who will assess the status of the publication. The respondents of this research will come from the selected stakeholders of the school which includes three hundred eighty (380) students, twelve (12) teachers, one (1) Federated PTA Officer, and one (1) Administrative Staff for a total of three hundred

ninety-four (394) respondents who are considered readers of the student publication. Also, there were fifteen (15) student-journalists of the school who undergo the five-day intensive training in campus journalism.

Instrument of the Study

Two instruments were used in the study: A pretest/post-test instrument and an evaluation rubric which was used as the main tool in gathering data for this research. The pre-test/ post-test for assessing student journalists writing skills includes the concepts that they should possess as a member of the staff and as a campus journalist. Fact sheets were made by the trainers and were given to the participants of the training. Concepts in writing news, sports, science and editorial article as well as in copyreading, headlining, lay outting and photojournalism.

The evaluation rubrics for assessing the status of publication includes indicators adapted from the guidelines for the selection of the best school paper. It includes indicators under the contents and pages, documentation, photographs and illustrations, editing and copyreading, and layout and appearance. The evaluation rubrics was adopted in the recent guidelines of the DepEd school's press conference.

A reliability test using Cronbach's alpha was used to ensure consistency and interrelationships among items in the instrument. The result of the reliability test is presented in Table 1. It can be seen on the table that the Cronbach's Alpha is higher than the .7 hence higher reliability of the instrument.

Table 1. Reliability Test for Instrument

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Contents and Pages	.962	19
News Page	.877	7
Feature Page	.909	4
Sports Page	.806	3
Editorial Page	.794	5
Documentation	.700	5
Photographs and Illustrations	.889	7
Editing and Copy	.806	6
Layout and Appearance	.733	4

Note: "Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.7 indicates intercorrelations and consistency between indicators of all variables, hence, high reliability of the instrument"

Statistical Analysis

In this study, the researcher used the following statistical tools: weighted mean to determine the status of the student publication; Likert scale to assess range score in the status of the publication; rubric mean score to determine the level of writing skills of the student-journalists; correlated t-test for the difference on the status of student publication

before and after the training; and Pearson Product-Moment coefficient to determine how the pairs of variables are related.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Journalistic Writing Skills of the Staffers

Journalistic writing skills refer to communication art skills being developed in journalism, such as writing articles concerning news, editorial, and opinion, feature, sports, and science news. Improving students' journalistic skills is the main concern of campus journalism, which is legally stated in the Campus Journalism Act of 1992. In this context, the researcher aimed to determine the level of journalistic writing skills of staffers before and after a Five-Day Intensive Training. Students' level of journalistic writing skills is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Level of Journalistic Writing Skills of Staffers Before and After the Five-Day Intensive Training on Campus Journalism

Area	Pre-Training		Post-Training	
	Mean Score	Qualitative Interpretation	Mean Score	Qualitative Interpretation
Headline Writing and Copy Reading (10pts.)	7.0	Proficiency	9.50	Advanced Proficiency
News writing (25pts.)	16.33	Proficiency	22.50	Advanced Proficiency
Feature Writing (30pts.)	23.50	Proficiency	25.50	Advanced Proficiency
Sports Writing (25pts.)	19.0	Proficiency	21.0	Advanced Proficiency
Photojournalism (20pts.)	14.0	Proficiency	20.0	Advanced Proficiency
Editorial Writing (30pts.)	22.50	Proficiency	29.0	Advanced Proficiency

This result in the scores of staffers indicates an improvement in their journalistic writing skills after they underwent the Five-Day Intensive Training. This implies that the training was effective in improving their journalistic writing skills and that they acquired positive values on the importance of improving their writing skills. [18] stated that with journalistic writing, students have the opportunity that is missing elsewhere to expand, stretch, and write creatively. Although news articles typically follow a consistent inverted pyramid structure (i.e., start with the most important and pertinent information at the top of the article), the best news and feature articles often include vivid descriptions, captivating narrative writing, and even use first-person writing. These approaches not only serve to stir creative thinking but are also more challenging for young writers.

Status of Student Publication

Student publication status refers to the value given to the school paper based on the survey questionnaire prepared for this research. The respondents rated the different sections of the school paper according to their assessment of how it is presented. They rated both on the school paper published before and after the conduct of the Five-Day Intensive Training for Campus Journalism. Table 3 shows the pre-training and post-training status of the school paper.

Table 3. Status of Student Publication Before and After the Five-Day Intensive Training on Campus Journalism

Sections of Publication	Pre-Training		Post-Training	
	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation	Wt. Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
Contents and Pages	3.89	Very Satisfactory	4.15	Very Satisfactory
News Page	3.98	Very Satisfactory	4.14	Very Satisfactory
Feature Page	3.89	Very Satisfactory	4.17	Very Satisfactory
Editorial Page	3.83	Very Satisfactory	4.12	Very Satisfactory
Sports Page	3.88	Very Satisfactory	4.18	Very Satisfactory
Documentation	4.11	Very Satisfactory	4.38	Very Satisfactory
Photographs and Illustrations	3.82	Very Satisfactory	4.12	Very Satisfactory
Editing and Copy Reading	3.87	Very Satisfactory	4.16	Very Satisfactory
Layout and Appearance	4.02	Very Satisfactory	4.31	Very Satisfactory

Note: 4.50 – 5.00 (Excellent); 3.50 – 4.49 (Very Satisfactory); 2.50 – 3.49 (Good); 1.50 – 2.49 (Fair); 1.00 – 1.49 (Poor)

It can be seen that the school paper was rated very satisfactory in terms of all its sections with the highest rating on the documentation (4.11, very satisfactory) style of the paper and with the lowest mean rate of 3.82 (Very Satisfactory) in terms of photographs and illustrations. However, a slight increase in the weighted means on all sections indicates that the school paper is at a very satisfactory level after the conduct of the training. It can be noted, that documentation (4.38, very satisfactory) remains the highest-rated and photographs and illustrations (4.12) remains to have the lowest rating among all the major sections of the paper. This however indicates an increase in respondents rating of the school paper from the published paper before the training to the one published after the training.

This implies that the training resulted in an improved school publication, as a result of the improved journalistic

writing skills of the staffers. The school paper may be effectively used as an additional incentive to accuracy in reporting, for when students realize that their errors will stand out in print, where all their schoolmates will see the mistakes, they are likely to exercise great care in their writing. This implies that the status of the school paper as assessed by the readers are of great importance for the young writers to improve the school paper. To express their ideas clearly, student writers need to be trained to use concrete, specific words instead of vague and general ones. Objectivity in reporting has long been a fundamental concept of journalism within a democratic society [19].

This supports [20] who stated that a journalism program can address literacy with these types of documents, through the necessary research that students engage in while working on stories for their media outlets. Additionally, journalism gives students familiarity and fluency in writing, which can be applied in almost every aspect of a student's scholastic career. While it is clear that a journalism program is useful for anyone hoping to become a journalist, these skills extend into virtually every career one can imagine. The interdisciplinary nature of journalistic content is a source of fertile learning opportunity for his students, giving them a chance to educate themselves about a wide range of topics, from social issues to finance. A journalism program does not just create journalists; it creates leaders, activists, lawyers, politicians, authors, accountants, teachers, and infinitely more.

Conduct of the Five-Day Intensive Training on Campus Journalism

Intensive training aimed to enhance student's skills in different areas or genres of journalism and to capacitate them to compete on Press Conferences at the district, division, regional, and national levels.

Before the training was proposed and materialized, an assessment on the June-November 2018 student publication was conducted to 394 respondents comprised of Students, Teachers, Federated PTA Officers, and Administrative Staff. The respondents were chosen through random sampling. After the assessment, a five-day training regarding the different genres of campus journalism was designed by the researcher.

Fifteen student-writers last year who were also interested to be a part of this year's editorial board participated in the five-day training and underwent an assessment in terms of writing skills. This was done by the researcher through the cooperation of the SPAs. The said fifteen writers and the other participants for the training were required to write an article depending on their field and submit it to the office of the student publication. The articles made by the fifteen writers and the other participants were evaluated by the speakers using the tool prepared for the said purpose. The evaluation on the writing skills was also used in determining the area which will be given a thorough discussion on the training.

The participants were grouped into two – SPJ and non-SPJ groups since there were only two available rooms. The five-day intensive training was done. The articles they made during the workshop were evaluated again by the same evaluators by using the same tool during the pre-assessment. This was also made to choose the top 3 for each category which will have the chance to compete for the upcoming District Press Conference (individual and group contest). The top three were recognized during the last day of the training workshop.

Right after the training, members of the staff were identified. Members of the editorial board through the assistance of the publication advisers started to materialize the student publication for June-December 2010. After the copy of the student publication was submitted to the Division office, the researcher reproduced copies (in legal size) for assessment. The same respondents assessed the latest issue of *The Reporter*, the official student publication of Subic National High School.

Change in the Status of “The Reporter” after the five-day intensive training on Campus Journalism

After the conduct of the five-day intensive training on campus journalism, improvement in the writing skills of the staffers were expected. These improvements in writing skill were also expected to be evident in the status of the school publication. Table 4 presents the T-Test on the Status of “The Reporter” before and after The Five-Day Training for Campus Journalism.

It can be seen on the table that Contents and Pages ($t=8.168$) has $p\text{-value}=0.000$ which is less than the set alpha level ($\alpha=0.05$). This signifies rejection of the null hypothesis. Hence there is a significant difference in the contents and pages of the school publication before and after the training. Taking a look at the major pages, News Page ($t=3.638$) Feature Page ($t=6.219$), Editorial Page ($t=6.415$) and Sports Page ($t=6.242$) had all significance values ($p=0.000$) less than $\alpha=0.05$, hence, the significant difference before and after the training.

Table 4. T-Test on the Status of “The Reporter” before and after The Five-Day Training

Publication Pages	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
Contents and Pages	8.168	393	.000	Significant
News Page	3.638	393	.000	Significant
Feature Page	6.219	393	.000	Significant
Editorial Page	6.415	393	.000	Significant
Sports Page	6.242	393	.000	Significant
Documentation	5.752	393	.000	Significant
Photographs and Illustrations	6.887	393	.000	Significant
Editing and Copy Reading	6.446	393	.000	Significant
Layout and Appearance	5.548	393	.000	Significant

Moreover, Documentation ($t=5.752$), Photographs and Illustrations ($t=6.887$), Editing and Copy Reading ($t=6.446$) and Layout and Appearance ($t=5.548$) had significance values ($p=0.000$) less than $\alpha=0.05$. This indicates rejection of the null hypothesis. Hence, there is a significant difference in the status of the school paper in terms of all these sections before and after the training. This implies that the staffers acquire the necessary skill and have improved in their journalistic writing skills as evidence by this significant change in the status of “The Reporter”. It can be inferred that the Five-Day Intensive Training for Campus Journalism had a positive impact on the staffer’s journalism skills and consequently on the status of the school publication.

These findings on the importance of training for writers support SPA (2018) that in a world where labels like ‘fake news’, ‘post-truth’ and ‘alternative facts’ threaten to undermine legitimate journalism in the public interest, professional training has, arguably, never been more important for the credibility and integrity of its practitioners. To be able to demonstrate that the stories and content generated by modern journalists are underpinned by rigorous training in accuracy, impartiality, balance and fair dealing and is delivered in a way that meets the rightly demanding ethical standards of industry regulators, is a powerful antidote to those detractors who may throw around those labels like mud in the hope some sticks.

To instill in new journalists these essential values coupled with the skills of story finding and storytelling plus the latest digital production tools has the potential to restore trust for those in whom it might be waning.

Relationship between Journalistic Skills and the Status of the School Publication “The Reporter”

This study aimed to find out that the journalistic writing skills of staffers and their relationship with the status of the student publication “The Reporter” after the Five-Day Intensive Training on Campus Journalism. Table 5 presents the summarized correlation table between the students’ journalistic writing skills and the status of “The Reporter” after the training program.

The correlation table reveals that the Contents and Pages had a moderate-high positive correlation with Headline Writing and Copy Reading ($r=.638$), News Writing ($r=.561$), Feature Writing ($r=.621$), Sports Writing ($r=.582$) and Photojournalism ($r=.571$), significant at .01 level. This indicates a positive relationship between the journalistic writing skills of students and the contents and pages of the school publication.

Table 5. Correlation between Students’ Journalistic Writing Skills and Status of Official School Publication

Journalistic Writing Skills	Coefficients	School Paper Sections				
		Contents &	Documentation	Photographs &	Editing &	Layout &

		Page s		Illustra tions	Cop y Rea ding	Appea rance
Headline Writing & Copy Reading	Pearson Corr.	.638* *	.496**	.411**	.698 **	.564**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	394	394	394	394	394
News Writing	Pearson Corr.	.561* *	.441**	.401**	.414 **	.422**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	394	394	394	394	394
Feature Writing	Pearson Corr.	.621* *	.434**	.451**	.532 **	.403**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	394	394	394	394	394
Sports Writing	Pearson Corr.	.582* *	.513**	.622**	.411 **	.419**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	394	394	394	394	394
Photo- journalism	Pearson Corr.	.571* *	.506**	.668**	.402 **	.623**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	394	394	394	394	394

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The documentation had a moderate low positive correlation with Headline Writing and Copy Reading ($r=.496$), News Writing ($r=.441$) and Feature Writing ($r=.434$) but with a moderate-high positive correlation with Sports Writing ($r=.513$) and Photojournalism ($r=.506$), significant at .01 level. This suggests a positive effect of the improved writing skills of the staffers on the status of student publication in terms of documentation.

The importance of skills needed to turn newsgathering into news production. Similar levels of importance are given to such skills as storytelling, writing in a fluent style, using correct grammar and understanding audience expectations and needs [21].

Photographs and Illustrations had a moderate-high positive correlation with Sports Writing ($r=.622$) and Photojournalism ($r=.668$) significant at .01 level. Editing and Copy Reading status had a moderate positive correlation with Headline Writing and Copy Reading skills ($r=.698$) and Feature Writing ($r=.532$) significant at .01 level. Layout and Appearance of the school publication had a moderate-high positive correlation with Headline Writing and Copy Reading ($r=.564$) and Photojournalism

($r=.623$) significant at .01 level. This relationship finding supports [22] who stated that Journalists are often storytellers at heart, and those that focus on human interest or humanitarian stories have the chance to tell the stories of people who might not otherwise have a voice. These messages can have a positive impact in the world, changing perceptions, especially of the readers, serving as calls to action and opening doors to positive discourse.

These premises suggest a significant positive relationship between the journalistic writing skills of the staffers and the status of "The Reporter". This implies that the improvement of the journalistic skills of writers after the training resulted in a more improved status of the school paper. This supports the [23] that simply putting out the various happening in the society in a sheet of paper and spread it to people will surely bring big changes in their lives using an effective publication. It has the power to influence people or readers especially those who have a deep concern for the community where they belong, and that is the prime duty of journalistic writing. Writing is a powerful instrument to voice out the sentiments of students concerning the school management, the condition of their learning environment, the treatment of the educators towards them and the various activities of students inside and outside the school campus.

V. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

Based on the results of this study, the researcher identified improvement in the level of the student-journalists writing skills. The staffers of the student publication – "The Reporter" had improved their journalistic writing skills after the conduct of the Five-Day Intensive Training on Campus Journalism in terms of headline writing (9.50 or Advanced Proficiency), news writing and feature writing (22.50 or Advanced Proficiency), sports writing (21.0 or Advanced Proficiency), photojournalism (20.0 or Advanced Proficiency) and editorial writing (29.0 or advanced proficiency). For the status of the student publication after the conduct of the training, it has a slight increase in the mean rating on the student publications which indicates a slight improvement in its status as rated by readers with the documentation (4.38 or Very Satisfactory) as the highest section. The conduct of the Five-Day Intensive Training on Campus Journalism had a significant positive effect on the journalistic writing skills of the staffers. The study also noticed an improved journalistic writing skill because the training consequently resulted in an improved school paper. The researcher suggested that in improving the journalistic writing skills of students, continuous training should be proposed by the school and the school paper adviser to enhance further the journalistic writing skills of the staffers.

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